

Full Text AR-97-001

SMALL GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE NIAMS

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National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases

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PURPOSE

The National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) is seeking small grant (R03) applications to stimulate and facilitate the entry of promising new investigators into targeted, high priority areas of NIAMS research. This one-time solicitation will provide support for pilot research that is likely to lead to a subsequent individual research project grant (R01) or a First Independent Research Support and Transition (FIRST) (R29) award application.

HEALTHY PEOPLE 2000

The Public Health Service (PHS) is committed to achieving the health promotion and disease prevention objectives of "Healthy People 2000," a PHS-led national activity for setting priority areas. This Request for Applications (RFA), Small Grant Program for the NIAMS, is related to the priority area of chronic diseases. Potential applicants may obtain a copy of "Healthy People 2000" (Full Report: Stock No. 017-001-11474-0 or Summary Report: Stock No. 017-001-11473-

1) through the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402-9325 (telephone 202-512-1800).

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applications may be submitted by domestic for-profit and non-profit organizations, public and private, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, laboratories, units of State and local governments, and eligible agencies of the Federal government. Racial/ethnic minority individuals, women, and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply as Principal Investigators. Foreign organizations and institutions are not eligible. Participation in the program by investigators at minority institutions is strongly encouraged. Pilot project grants awarded through this RFA may not be used to support thesis or dissertation research.

Current and previous recipients of NIH funding through Research Project Grants (R01) or FIRST (R29) awards are ineligible for this Small Grant Program. Principal Investigators of research subprojects of Research Program Projects (P01) and Centers (P50 and P60) and individuals who have received research support from the National Science Foundation (NSF) or Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as Principal Investigators are also ineligible. Individuals whose sole previous support has been through developmental (pilot) and feasibility studies may apply.

Former and current recipients of NIH Small Research Grants (R03), Academic Research Enhancement Awards (R15), Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Awards (K08), Mentored Research Scientist Development Awards (K01), Shannon Awards (R55), or Individual (F32) or Institutional (T32) National Research Service Award (NRSA) training support are eligible to apply for this Small Grant Program. However, any current support by the F32 or T32 mechanisms must terminate before Small Grant support begins.

The work proposed may not overlap significantly with the aims of currently supported projects in which the Principal Investigator has participated during the last five years. (Information on such projects is to be provided as part of the Principal Investigator's Biographical Sketch, as described below under Application Procedures.)

Investigators who have questions about eligibility should contact one of the program officials listed under INQUIRIES.

MECHANISM OF SUPPORT

Applicants may request up to \$50,000 (direct costs) per year for up to three years through the small grant (R03) mechanism. It is anticipated that grants would be awarded no later than September 30, 1997. These awards are not renewable. Before completion of the R03, investigators are encouraged to seek continuing support for research through a research project grant (R01) or FIRST (R29) award.

Replacement of the Principal Investigator on this award is not permitted.

FUNDS AVAILABLE

It is estimated that \$1.0 million (total costs) will be available to support approximately 12 to 15 awards under this program. Awards are contingent on the availability of appropriated funds and on the receipt of sufficiently meritorious applications meeting the stated eligibility requirements.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The Small Grant program is designed to facilitate the entry of promising new investigators into high priority areas identified by the NIAMS. Investigators may apply for a small grant to support research in one of the following general areas:

Angiogenesis

- o Endothelial cell dysfunction leading to changes in adhesiveness or blood vessel tone; endothelial cell interactions with inflammatory cells and components of the extracellular matrix; phenotypic changes and biochemical mechanisms of endothelial cell response to inflammatory/immune-mediated tissue injury as they relate to the normal function and diseases of musculoskeletal and connective tissue.
- o Regulatory factors controlling vascular structure, including molecular events that regulate angiogenesis, endothelial and vascular smooth muscle cell growth and cell death in the context of rheumatic and other connective and musculoskeletal diseases.
- o Immune responses directed against vascular components
- o Pathogenesis of vascular manifestations of rheumatic and systemic autoimmune diseases such as lupus, dermatomyositis, scleroderma and rheumatoid arthritis

- o Studies of vasculitis and vasculopathies in animal models of rheumatic diseases, with emphasis on identification of pathogenetic mechanisms and molecular targets for therapeutic intervention
- o Therapeutic potential of angiogenesis inhibitors/modulators in rheumatoid arthritis
- o Therapeutic potential of angiogenesis inhibitors/modulators in psoriasis, immune and non-immune inflammation of the skin (including irritant and allergic contact dermatitis), autoimmune diseases of skin, atopic dermatitis, and wound healing
- o Inflammatory cell interactions with vasculature in the initiation of immune and non-immune inflammation of the skin and in wound healing
- o Mechanisms of exercise-induced changes in vascularization of muscle, bone, and connective tissue
- o Mechanisms of vascularization of new tissue during wound healing in skin and muscle, and during formation of new bone in fracture healing, defect repair, and integration of prosthetic implants

Mechanisms of self-recognition in autoimmunity

- o Molecular pathways and regulatory steps in self-antigen processing
- o Physicochemical properties of the complex between self-components and antigen-presenting molecules
- o Design of therapies to prevent abnormal responses to self by affecting antigen processing

Bone and Connective Tissue Repair

- o Formation and repair of tendons and ligaments and their junctions with muscle, cartilage and bone, including characterization of the cell types involved and critical regulatory factors
- o Cellular and molecular basis of osteolysis occurring at the sites of total joint replacements, including the involvement of wear debris particles, cytokines and specific cellular interactions

- o Mechanisms of induction of bone and connective tissue growth by mechanical stimuli
- o Development of allografts and other materials as substitutes for musculoskeletal tissues destroyed by tumors or lost as a consequence of trauma
- o Mechanisms of bone growth and growth plate organization, especially as relevant to repair of growth plate injuries and treatment modalities such as limb lengthening

Stem Cell Biology

- o Identification, isolation, and culture of stem cells of epidermis and skin appendages, as they relate to skin diseases and wound healing, and to the development of skin-based gene therapy for skin and systemic diseases
- o Characterization of the mesenchymal progenitors of chondrocytes and osteoblasts, including factors that influence commitment to a particular differentiative pathway, and the ability of the cells to circulate and/or "home" to specific tissues
- o Characterization of the satellite cells of muscle, including their derivation, location, relative numbers and relation to other stem cell types

Other Research

- o Rheumatic and dermatological manifestations of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
- o Pathogenesis of alopecia areata and vitiligo.

INCLUSION OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES IN RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

It is the policy of the NIH that women and members of minority groups and their subpopulations must be included in all NIH supported biomedical and behavioral research projects involving human subjects, unless a clear and compelling rationale and justification are provided that inclusion is inappropriate with respect to the health of the subjects or the purpose of the research. This new policy results from the NIH Revitalization Act of 1993 (Section 492B of Public Law 103-43) and supersedes and strengthens the previous policies (Concerning the Inclusion of Women in Study Populations, and Concerning the Inclusion of Minorities in Study Populations) which have

been in effect since 1990. The new policy contains some provisions that are substantially different from the 1990 policies. All investigators proposing research involving human subjects should read the "NIH Guidelines for Inclusion of Women and Minorities as Subjects in Clinical Research", which have been published in the Federal Register of March 28, 1994 (FR 59 14508-14513) and reprinted in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts, Volume 23, Number 11, March 18, 1994.

Investigators also may obtain copies of the policy from the program staff listed under INQUIRIES. Program staff may also provide additional relevant information concerning the policy.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applications are to be submitted on grant application form PHS 398 (rev. 5/95). Application kits are available at most institutional offices of sponsored research and may be obtained from the Division of Extramural Outreach and Information Resources, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7910, Bethesda, MD 20892-7910, telephone 301/435-0714, Email: asknih@odrockm1.od.nih.gov

The following instructions are to be used in conjunction with the information accompanying application form PHS-398 (rev. 5/95). They refer only to selected items in the application form. All PHS-398 requirements must be adhered to, with the exception of those items affected by the following instructions; for example, the Research Plan is limited to 10 pages. Applications not conforming to the requested format will be returned to the applicant without review. Please note that some of the information to be omitted from the application at submission may be requested following review if the possibility of funding exists.

Face Page

- o Item 2, Response to Specific Program Announcement: Check the box marked YES. Enter the RFA number (AR-97-001) and title (NIAMS Small Grants Program).
- o Item 6, Dates of Proposed Period of Support. Up to a total of three years of support may be proposed.
- o The RFA label available in the PHS 398 application form must be affixed to the bottom of the face page of the application. Failure to use this label could result in delayed processing of the application such that it may not reach the review committee in time for review.

Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period (Page 4)

- o Do not complete or submit this page.

Budget for Entire Proposed Period of Support (Page 5)

- o Composite Budget Table: Enter total direct costs requested, up to a maximum of \$50,000, for each year of support (up to three).
- o Justification: Provide a narrative justification for each proposed personnel position, including role on the project and proposed level of effort
- o Provide narrative justification for the additional resources requested for the conduct of the project.

Biographical Sketch (Page 6) (Complete for each of the key personnel listed on Form Page 2.)

- o Research and Professional Experience: List current position(s) and those previous positions directly relevant to the application.
- o List selected peer-reviewed publications directly relevant to the proposed project, with full citations.
- o Provide information on research projects completed and/or research grants in which the investigator participated during the last five years which are relevant to the proposed project. For each project or grant listed, provide title, name of Principal Investigator, funding source, and role on project (if not Principal Investigator).

Other Support (Page 7)

- o Do not complete or submit this section.

Research Plan

- o Items a - d of the Research Plan (Specific Aims, Background and Significance, Preliminary Studies, and Research Design and Methods) may not exceed a total of 10 pages. Please note

that a Progress Report is not needed; no competing continuation applications will be accepted for an R03.

Appendix

- o No appendix material may be submitted.

Checklist

- o The Checklist should not be submitted.

Submit a signed original of the application and four signed copies in one package to:

DIVISION OF RESEARCH GRANTS
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
6701 ROCKLEDGE DRIVE, ROOM 1040 - MSC-7710
BETHESDA MD 20892-7710
Bethesda MD 20817 (for express/courier service)

At the time of submission, one additional copy of the application must be sent to:

Tommy L. Broadwater, Ph.D.
Scientific Review Branch
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases
Natcher Building, Room 5AS-25U
45 Center Drive, MSC 6500
Bethesda, MD 20892-6500

In order not to delay review, it is important that applicants comply with this request.

Applications must be received by March 18, 1997. If an application is received after that date, it will be returned to the applicant without review. Only one Small Grant application may be submitted by a Principal Investigator. Applicants may not submit an R01 or R29 application for the February 1 or March 1, 1997 receipt date if that application involves significant scientific overlap with a Small Grant application.

REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

Upon receipt, applications will be reviewed for completeness by DRG. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration. NIAMS staff will review applications for responsiveness to the research objectives of this RFA and for the eligibility of the Principal Investigator under the requirements stated above. Applications found to be unresponsive or ineligible will be returned without further consideration.

Applications that are complete and responsive to the RFA will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by an appropriate peer review committee convened by the NIAMS in accordance with the usual NIH peer review procedures. Applications will be evaluated with respect to the following criteria:

- o Scientific originality and significance of the proposed research
- o Likelihood of the proposed pilot project leading to the development of an R01/R29 grant application
- o Ability of the Principal Investigator to direct the proposed research, as demonstrated by the quality of the research plan and the Investigator's training and experience
- o Documented availability of resources necessary for the research, including any needed to supplement the budget
- o Adequacy of adherence to guidelines for including gender and minority representation in any study population.

AWARD CRITERIA

The following will be considered in making funding decisions:

- o Quality of the proposed project as determined by peer review
- o Importance of the area to NIAMS research
- o Availability of funds.

INQUIRIES

Inquiries are encouraged. The opportunity to clarify any issues or questions from potential applicants is welcome.

Direct inquiries regarding programmatic issues to:

Dr. Susana A. Serrate-Sztein

Rheumatic Diseases

Natcher Building, Room 5AS-37G

Bethesda, MD 20892-6500

Telephone: (301) 594-5032

FAX: (301) 480-4543

Email: SzteinS@ep.niams.nih.gov

Dr. Bernadette Tyree

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Bethesda, MD 20892-6500

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Email: TyreeB@ep.niams.nih.gov

Dr. Richard W. Lymn

Muscle Biology

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Bethesda, MD 20892-6500

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FAX: (301) 480-4543

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Dr. James S. Panagis

Orthopedics

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Bethesda, MD 20892-6500

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Email: PanagisJ@ep.niams.nih.gov

Dr. Alan N. Moshell

Skin Diseases

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Bethesda, MD 20892-6500
Telephone: (301) 594-5017
FAX: (301) 480-4543
Email: MoshellA@ep.niams.nih.gov

Dr. William J. Sharrock
Bone Biology
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Bethesda, MD 20892-6500
Telephone: (301) 594-5055
FAX: (301) 480-4543
Email: SharrocW@ep.niams.nih.gov

Direct inquiries regarding fiscal matters to:

Sally Nichols
Grants Management Branch
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases
Natcher Building, Room 5AS-49F
45 Center Drive, MSC 6500
Bethesda, MD 20892-6500
Telephone: (301) 594-3535
FAX: (301) 480-5450
Email: NicholsS@ep.niams.nih.gov

AUTHORITY AND REGULATIONS

This program is described in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance No. 93.846. Awards are made under authorization of the Public Health Service Act, Title IV, Part A (Public Law 78-410), as amended by Public Law 99-158, 42 USC 241 and 285) and administered under PHS grants policies and Federal Regulations 42 CFR 52 and 45 CFR Part 74. This program is not subject to the intergovernmental review requirements of Executive Order 12372 or Health Systems Agency review.

The PHS strongly encourages all grant recipients to provide a smoke-free workplace and promote the non-use of all tobacco products. In addition, public law 103-227, the pro-children act of 1994, prohibits smoking in certain facilities (or in some cases, any portion of a facility) in which regular

or routine education, library, day care, health care or early childhood development services are provided to children. This is consistent with the PHS mission to protect and advance the physical and mental health of the american people.

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